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POEM-MINIATURES

BY

MARTHA MARTIN

(A. G. G.)



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" And what is writ is writ—
would it were worthier."

—BYRON.



DEDICATED TO
MY MOTHER.

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ON—

My soul is quickened as I gaze on thee,
Oh ! thou of whom it may in truth be said,
That man was after God's own image made.
How full of love and kind benignity
Each tender glance of those dear eyes, so true,
Reflecting all the light of Heaven through.

(7)

SUNDAY.

In the valley deep and lowly
Breathes a heavenly Sabbath peace ;
On the silent hills so holy,
Voices bid all tumult cease.

And the babbling brooklet rushing
With impetuous hurry by,
Leaping, sparkling, gurgling, gushing,
Murmurs gently, "God is nigh."

Zephyrs, on their flight so airy,
Waft their message from above ;
Whispering softly, never weary,
"God is full of grace and love."

Little birds, their swift course winging,
Send their offerings to the sky ;
In their sweetest rich tones singing
Songs of praise to him on high.

And a holy calm is stealing
Over all the earth to-day,
God, Himself to man revealing,
Pointing out the heavenly way.

APRIL.

Offspring of Spring, thou whose life-giving breath
Wakens the earth from her long-seeming death,
Winter has fled at the sight of thy face.
Hail, O thou month full of beauty and grace !

Blithely the robin, in gay plumage dressed,
Chirps to his mate, busied weaving her nest ;
Swallows, long absent, their flight hither wing,
Happy to welcome thee, sweet child of Spring.

Buds of bright promise burst forth from each tree ;
Violet and snowdrop peep out smilingly ;
Heaven broods fondly o'er earth, like a dove ;
Everything living tells only of love.

April, thou babe full of laughter and tears,
Innocent art thou of man's griefs and fears :
Buoyant, light-hearted, thy days glide away,
Blooming at length into flowery May.

TRUST.

I know not if beyond the blue
And ever-placid sky,
A home of perfect love and peace
Awaits me when I die,

Where sin and darkness are no more,
Nor man shall grieve nor sigh,
And God will wipe away the tears
From every mortal eye ;

Where Christ shall bid the weary soul,
Sore-laden and oppressed,
To come to him, and he will give
Them sweet, eternal rest.

I know not if Death bears away
Our loved ones to that goal,
Nor if the circle broken here
Be in that home made whole.

But this I know : that God is love,
He lives and cares for all ;
Our souls are his, our bodies, too,—
He guards us, great and small.

Thus, while no more to mortal sight
Our loved one doth appear,
I known that in God's arm of love
He lives from year to year.

In filial reverence, I yield
Unto my Father's will.
Conscious that he is wise and good,
I live, and trust him still.

SPRING'S AWAKENING.

Above the ground they raise their heads,
Blue violet and anemone,
Proclaiming from their earthy beds
New life, and more abundantly.

The winter storms are all forgot ;
And snowflakes vanish one by one,
Melting in tears as they are shot
By golden arrows of the sun.

The very bosom of Heaven on high
Is heaving with fresh, conscious breath ;
And birds in choirs sing out and cry,
There is no death, there is no death.

THE NUN.

(Translated from the German of Uhland.)

I.

In the quiet convent garden stole one eve a virgin nun.
The moon cast all its rays upon her as she walked alone.
And on her lashes lingered tears of silent, tender love,
Which she had shed for one whose spirit passed from
earth above.

II.

Ah ! 'tis well for me that he has died, that faithful lover
mine,
For I may love him ever more with love pure and divine,
He is an angel holy, clothed in robes of spotless white,
And it's not wrong to love the angels of celestial light.

III.

With timid step and saddened mien, she moved to where
there stood
An image of St. Mary beaming in the light of God,
The moonlight threw a halo o'er her saintly, sacred head,
She looked with such a mild and kindly love upon the
maid.

IV

At her feet the pious nun fell down, and clasped her hands
in prayer,
Looked up in calm and heavenly peace to find an
answer there;
And as she tends her gaze still upwards with a heart's
true faith,
Her flowing veil enshrouds her, and her eyelids close
in death.



A SNOW-FLAKE.

Dainty little snow-flake,
Fluttering through the air
Till you lie upon the ground
White and pure and fair.
But the sun is shining now,
You are gone again.
Tell me, starry snow-flake,
Was your life in vain ?

High ideals and prospects
Filled my longing soul,
Noble aims and deeds I planned
As my wished for goal.
But by unforeseen events
All my hopes are slain ;
Then I wonder whether
Striving is in vain.

THE WIND'S LAMENT.

Alas! sad wind, what grief is thine,
That thou dost evermore repine?
In vain I long to have thee cease.
What sorrow robs thee of thy peace,
That, rushing on with heaving breast,
Thy aching heart can find no rest?

And doth the chaste-eyed daisy know
The secret cause of all thy woe?
For she, with signs drawn full and deep,
Hath wept herself at length to sleep;
While on her lashes long and white
An undried tear lies glistening bright.

The stars, fair birds of paradise,
In flocks are scattered through the skies,
Their gentle slumbers broken by
The woful tenor of thy cry;
And so these poor, half-frightened things
Flutter all night their golden wings.

Art thou then doomed to wander on,
In never-ending wail and moan?
Art thou pursued by some dire fate,
That brings thee to this frenzied state?
Say, wind, what unknown grief is thine,
That thou dost evermore repine?

COME UNTO ME.

Come unto me, all ye that labor ;
Come all to me, ye heavily oppressed ;
Come unto me, all ye fatigued with burdens,—
Come unto me, and I will give you rest.

Come, poor ; come, rich ; come, erring ones and good,—
Come all to me who seek the heavenly goal,
Come heed your Shepherd's call, your Pattern, Guide,
Come all to find sweet rest unto your soul.

Come unto me, all ye bowed down in sadness,
And I will heal the wound, so sore, of grief ;
Come cast your cares, your troubles, all on me,
And I will give you comfort and relief.

My yoke is easy, and my burden light :
Oh, grant your master's kind and fond request,—
Come unto me, all ye that labor,
Come unto me, and I will give you rest.

NOVEMBER.

The leaves upon the cold, damp ground,
All brown and withered lie,
While overhead dull, leaden clouds
Obscure the bright, blue sky.

The naked trees stretch forth their arms
Protection to implore,
And wailing winds are mourning now,
That summer is no more.

The swollen river dark and deep,
Moves slowly to the sea ;
While Time with his resistless step
Sinks in eternity.

Alas poor earth ! that lately shone
In richest, rosiest bloom ;
In this thy destined end, this woe
Thy melancholy doom ?

Ah, no ! when winter's spell is o'er,
Thy face will smile again,
And spring with new-born joy descend
To cheer the heart of man.

TO—

The Earth is veiled in twilight's gloom,
The sun's red light is gone,
And in the stillness here I muse
Alone, alone.

My mind dwells fondly o'er the past,
When Fortune gave the boon
Of a dear friend, who left me, ah !
Too soon, too soon.

'Twas in the Spring-time we first met,
My gentle friend and I ;
And oh ! how happily the hours
Flew by, flew by !

But Fate has set us far apart,
And here, within my home,
So often times I long for her
To come, to come.

Shall I gaze in those soulful eyes,
And clasp that hand again ?
Or shines, my brilliant Star of Hope,
In vain, in vain ?

I cannot tell, but trust that yet
United I shall be,
In closer friendship, warmer love,
With thee, with thee.

And though hot tears mine eyelids fill,
"All worketh for the best;"
Content, we love each other still,
I rest, I rest.

DEATH-MUSIC.

(Translated from the German of Uhland.)

"What music wakes me, sweet and low,
Out of my still repose?
O mother, see! dost thou not know
What sounds so late are those?"

"I can hear nought, and nought I see.
Oh, slumber soft and mild!
No one is singing now to thee,
My darling, suffering child."

"No earthly music can it be
That makes my soul delight:
It is the angels calling me,—
O mother dear, good-night.

WHEREFORE.

Ah ! why must what is beautiful
On earth so soon decay,
And all we love and cherish most
Be quick to fade away ?

The summer, with its birds and flowers,
Sheds beauty over all.
It blooms in glory for a while,
Then swiftly comes the Fall.

Joy cannot last, but must give place
To anguish and to pain,
As night succeeds each dawning day
And sunshine yields to rain.

Our golden visions, high ideals,
Oft near and real seem ;
Yet, when we try to grasp them, lo !
They vanish like a dream.

But man grows nobler as he strives
For love and truth and right,
E'en though he fail to reach his aim,
Or perish in the fight.

And sorrow, though it wound the heart,
Will peace and comfort bring ;
While autumn, with its wreck and ruin,
But paves the way for Spring.

TO A FLOWER.

Little flower upon the lea,
Mute I stand and gaze on thee,—
On thy sweet, uplifted face,
 Full of tenderest appealing,
 Evermore to me revealing
Beauty, matchless power, and grace.

Early dews drop softly down.
Silently thy brow they crown
With a pearly diadem ;
 And, with thanks by fragrance spoken,
 Thou receivest their fair token
Of a clear and sparkling gem.

When dim Twilight, clad in gray,
Soothes to rest the weary day,
Thee I see with bended head,
 All thy winglike petals folding ;
 While kind Sleep her sway is holding,
Till Night's shadowy form has fled.

Meek, white flower, I fain would grow
Pure and free from guile as thou,—
Onward, upward, striving high,
 Daily adding strength and sweetness,
 Filling up life's incompleteness,
Till I, too, shall droop and die.

THE ORPHAN'S PRAYER.

O Father of fatherless children
Look down in compassion, I pray,
And let me feel, Lord, that thy blessing
Is resting upon me to-day.

Thou knowest I need thy protection,
For other save thine have I none ;
Then visit me in my affliction,
An orphan left helpless and lone.

Alone must I live to encounter
A world that seems heartless and cold,
And out of the depths I am calling
"Uphold me, oh Father, uphold."

For Thou art the infinite pity,
To Thee, every creature is dear,
Thine arms everlasting surround us,
Then why should we lose faith, or fear ?

I mourn for the loved thou hast taken,
Though conscious thy will is the best ;
I mourn, but I trust in thy goodness,
And leave to thee, Father, the rest.

SPRING.

Once more the fields are clad in green,
The skies are blue and fair,
And violets sweet their fragrance waft
Throughout the balmy air.

Once more I hear the blithesome birds
Pour forth their happy song,
They wing their flight from tree to tree,
And carol all day long.

Yea, all the earth is glad and bright
For spring has come again,
But ah ! her beauty and her charms
Greet me in vain, in vain.

There's one dear face I loved so well
I never more shall see,
So do not wonder, gentle spring,
I find no joy in thee.

OUT OF THE NIGHT.

When, with flaming torch in hand,
Day steals softly toward the west,
Over all the shadowy land
Gloom and darkness rest.
Then a thousand kindly eyes,
Gleaming from their heights above,
Look down 'neath the sombre skies
In tender, pitying love,
Holding vigil through the night
Till the dawn of morning light.

When the world lies cold and bare,
After autumn's swift decay,
Lo! the earth grows white and fair,
As in blossoming May.
For, from flowers that bloom on high,
Countless, starry petals fall,
Fill the ground, the air, and sky,
Until they cover all,
Winter 'neath her snowy wing,
Hiding for awhile the Spring.

So, in human life's dark hour,
When the heart seems crushed with pain,
Some benign, consoling Power
Quickly cheers again.
Oft by trials, griefs, and woes
Man becomes more strong and brave,
Readier to give to those
Who love and mercy crave.
Thus earth's deepest sorrows shine
With a purpose all divine.



“AND DID THE LITTLE FLOWERS BUT KNOW.”

(*From the German of Heine.*)

I.

And did the little flowers but know
The anguish of my heart,
Their tears would surely fall and flow
To heal the wounded part.

II.

And if the nightingales but knew
My bitter pain and grief,
They gladly would console me through
Their song—and bring relief.

III.

And could the golden stars on high
Be conscious of my woe,
They would come out from yonder sky
To comfort me below.

IV.

But none of these can know, ah me !
The cause of all my pain ;—
It is but known to one, and *she*
Hath rent my heart in twain.

MY DEAD.

Cease, ringing bells, what can avail
Your constant piteous tones?
My loved one lies there cold and pale
And heedeth not your moans.

Thou sighest too for me, oh wind !
Thou sighest but in vain,
That gentle heart once warm and kind
Knows not my grief and pain.

Forever hushed the voice that seemed
Like music sweet to me,
Forever closed those eyes that beamed
With star-like radiancy.

And every summer blooms the rose
In its accustomed place,
The winter comes with frost and snows
But ah ! I miss that face.

Yet though beneath yon lonely hill
Thy form must buried lie ;
Thy spirit love, is with me still,
For it can never die.

Thou sleepest there all silent now
While I on earth abide ;
And yet, I feel, oh love, that thou
Art ever by my side.

A SONG OF SPRING.

Spring has come with sprightly footsteps,
Lending joy to hill and glen.
Daffodil and purple violet
Bloom out from the soil again.

Spring has come. Each tree rejoices
In its budding life once more :
Earth has never seemed more winsome,
Nor so nigh to heaven before.

Happy songs of thrush and linnet
Fill the sweetly scented air ;
And my bosom swells with gladness,
Living in a world so fair.

Weary wanderer, grievous mourner,
Let all care and sorrow flee !
Come, oh, come, at Spring's kind bidding,
Join the season's jubilee !

TO—

I.

Like sweet forget me-nots
All moistened with the early morning dew,
Are her appealing eyes ;
While tender, soulful thoughts
Within those mild, transparent depths of blue
For evermore arise.

II.

Her nature best compares,
In its unsullied purity and grace,
With that white, fragrant flower
Whose name she aptly bears ;
Oh, lily ! offspring of the May, I trace
In thee God's love and power.

AN EVENING PRAYER.

Bend and hear me, O my Father,
As I offer up my prayer,
When the silent shadows gather
In the dewy evening air.

I beseech, Lord, thy protection,
Guard thou me from every sin,
Pardon all past imperfection,
Help me love and truth to win.

Though life's way be dark and dreary,
In thee will I put my trust ;
Rest thou givest to the weary,—
Thou who art all-wise and just.

Let me feel thy presence ever,
As a power sweet and strong,
So that I may wander never
In the path of doubt and wrong.

Heavenly Father, bend and hear me,
Listen to my prayer to-night,
In my slumbers be thou near me,
Watch o'er me till morning light.

LOVE WILL LAST.

1.

The red rose blooms the summer through,
Until the autumn blast
Robs the sweet flower of scent and hue,
And then its life is past,
But thou, O Love, art strong and true,—
Thou, Love, wilt last, wilt last.

2.

The moon shines out, and o'er the night
Bright silvery rays are cast.
At length it fades ; for morning light
O'ertakes the night how fast,
But thou, O Love, art filled with might,—
Thou, Love, wilt last, wilt last.

3.

O human heart, 'tis at thy shrine
Love pays its homage vast.
The sweetest gift on earth is thine,
The deepest joy thou hast,
For love is changeless and divine,
And *love will last, will last.*

A NEW YEAR'S EVE.

(Translated from the German of Richter.)

I.

'Twas New Year's Eve, the Earth was wrapped
In winter's mantle, soft and white.
The sky was of the deepest blue,
With stars that glistened clear and bright.
And at the window of his room,
An aged man with snowy hair,
Stood gazing out with tearful eyes,
In utter anguish and despair.

II.

He knew Death's Angel soon would come—
He glanced far back on his past life,
But nothing save a ruined soul,
Could he retrace—but sin and strife.
His youth returned to him this night
As spectres—and recalled the days
His father guided him aright,
And bade him shun sin's evil ways.

III.

His conscience smote him sorely now,
He found his promises unkept ;
Unconsciously, in bitter grief
He looked towards Heaven, and wildly wept—
“ Oh ! Father, give me back my youth,
Place me once more upon the way
That leads to Virtue's sunny paths,
That I may change to better day.”

IV.

But, 'twas too late, his youth was gone,
It could not come to him again ;
And his dear father, too, was dead,
No more could he advise him then.

* * * *

V.

He watched the will-o'-wisp that danced
Upon the marsh in mystic ways,
Then vanished in the churchyard near :
He cried—“ There are my foolish days !”
A star came shooting down from Heaven,
And glittering, fell, and disappeared.
“ That am I,” said his aching heart,
Remorse then pained him, and he feared.

VI.

His glowing mind displayed to him
Night phantoms wandering far about,
The windmill raised its threatening arms
As if to crush him, without doubt.
And in the empty charnel-house
Was seen a mask, whose very form
Assumed his own, by slow degrees—
His heart was filled with terror's storm.

VII.

Now, in the midst of this sore strife,
Came floating liquid notes around,
Of New Year's music, soft and sweet,
As the hushed Vesper's holy sound.
While note to note fell on his ear,
Far from the church-tower, solemn, slow,
His mind grew calmer, more at ease,
And he felt strengthened in his woe.

VIII.

He looked out o'er the wide, wide world,
And out upon the blue horizon ;
He thought of dear friends of his youth,
All happy with a brighter vision !
Some teachers of all earthly things,
Some fathers with good children blest ;

They were all glad this New Year's Eve,
He only sad, in mind distressed.

IX.

With heavy sighs, and many tears,
He cried, "Oh ! 'I, too, might have been
So blest and happy, and might sleep,
Like you, my friends, in peace serene."
"Oh ! parents, dear, I might have been,
This New Year's Eve, so very glad,
Had I but lived as you had wished,
And had obeyed you—now I'm sad."

X.

He viewed, again, the charnel-house—
The mask, with features like his own ;
Rose up, and by his thoughts of ghosts,
Was changed to living youth, full grown !
He closed his eyes, he could not look,
A thousand hot tears fell like rain,
He softly sighed, senseless and sad—
"Come back, youth, oh ! come back again !"

XI.

And it did come, as he so wished,
For in this lovely New Year's night
He had but *dreamed* so fearfully :
He was a youth yet, glad and bright.

But all his errors they were true,
That was no fancy-faring dream ;
Yet he thanked God that he was young,
For time well-spent would better him.

XII.

Return with him, young reader, now,
If you stand on a devious way,
This dreadful dream your judge shall be
For future times, where'er you stay,
And should you then cry out aloud,
So full of woe—"Youth, come again!"
'Twill be too late : no youth, alas,
Shall come to be lived over then.

A HYMN.

I.

O Lord, I thank thee for the light
Thou causest forth to shine !
We see thy love both day and night,
Thou art the All-divine.

II.

When thou art near, we breathe in heaven,
And weary grows our sin ;
To heights celestial are we driven,
Thy spirit enters in.

III.

In weal or woe, in joy or pain,
We feel thy tender care.
Oh, be thou blessed! who dost reign
O'er all and everywhere.

TO A CROW.

Welcome art thou hither,
Glossy sable bird,
Come from regions thither,
Bringing gladsome word,—
That man's bright hopes of Spring no longer are deferred.

First art thou that darest
In this stormy clime,
With the news thou bearest
Of the budding prime,
When frost and cold and snow shall vanish for a time.

With what rapture filling
Every soul anew,
Hear we thy note thrilling
Wood and meadow through,
Eve violets 'neath the ground have oped their eyes of blue.

Like a trumpet warning
Sleepers to arise,
Thy deep voice at morning
In loud accents cries,
"Awake, creation, wake and lift ye to the skies!"

Bird of shadowy plumage,
Dark and dismal thou ;
Yet thy gloomy image,
Sombre, sullen crow,
Foretells the brightest season earth can ever show.

FIREFLIES.

O tiny, wingèd creatures,
Ye golden motes of light,
That shining through the darkness
Are seen, then lost to sight!

Are ye not fallen-stars, say,
From yon fleece-clouded sky,
And groping 'mid night's shadows,
To mount again on high?

Perhaps ye are the lanterns
Aërial watchman bear,
Who guard the sleeping flowers
All through the night with care.

O'er meadows, too, ye wander ;
And oft I see ye go
In merry parties, dancing,
All lightly, on tiptoe.

Like scintillations flashing
From some rare poet's mind,
Whose hidden fire burneth
With thoughts for humankind.

FIREFLIES.

Ye sparkle on and upwards,
Where deepest shades prevail ;
Like twinkling stars of night, gaze
On mountain, heath, and vale.

O tiny, wingèd creatures,
Ye golden motes of light,
That shining through the darkness
Are seen, then lost to sight!



AN AUTUMN WIND.

Over broad fields of ripe barley and corn,
Swift, on tiptoe,
Hurried a wind very early one morn,
Cheeks all aglow,
Just as the Autumn had kissed her farewell,
Leaving the earth that she loved, ah! so well.

Onward she sped, like Diana in chase,
Blowing her horn,
Never once resting or slackening her pace
Till she was borne
Close to the maple and great linden trees,
And here she tarried,—this wild Autumn breeze.

Then all the linden leaves trembled with dread,
Turning quite pale,
While listening maple leaves colored deep red,
Fearing this gale,
Quivered and murmured, not knowing this wind
Came for a purpose most loving and kind.

Each little leaf from the trees she brought down
Safe to earth's fold,
Changing their dresses for ones of dark brown
'Gainst frost and cold.

Then all the leaves curled themselves in a heap,
Lulled by the wind to a long Winter's sleep.

HOLLYHOCKS.

'Mid drowsy sunflowers tall,
That rear their heads above the garden wall,
The stately hollyhocks stand,
With crimson flowers close along each stem,
That glisten like the ruddiest ruby gem,
Set in an emerald wand.

Upon their native ground,
Like troops of well-drilled soldiers are they found,
Nature's own body-guard ;
And, clad in their bright scarlet coats-of-mail,
They for a time continue to prevail,
Unbroken and unscarred.

Till swiftly on the spot,
Comes August, a commander fierce and hot,
Leading his army forth.
Tossing their yellow plumes high in the air,
A valiant host of golden-rods appear,
And prove superior worth.

O hollyhocks that grow
So far above your sister flowers below,
Ye seem, while there ye stand,
The spires of God's cathedral, vast and free,
That point forever upward hopefully
Unto the better land.

The moist-eyed buttercup,
 Low at your feet, admiringly looks up,
 With sense of awe profound,
 While ye perform your mission pure and meek,
 And with your golden tongues a language speak,
 More eloquent than sound.

THE HEART.

*(Translated from the German
 of Neumann.)*

Two chambers hath the heart,
 Where dwell
 Both joy and pain apart.

When joy wakes in the one,
 Then sleeps
 Pain calmly in his own.

Oh, joy! thyself restrain,
 Speak softly—
 Lest thou awaken pain.

EVENING HYMN.

Guard me [~]throughout the silent night,
When none [^]but thou can see ;
For, Lord, the darkness and the light
Are both alike to thee.

When, by thy providential power,
Mine eyelids close in sleep,
Abide with me through every hour,
Thy vigil o'er me keep.

And if to-day, by word or deed,
My soul has gone astray,
Oh, pardon, Lord, the sin, and lead
Me in a better way.

Guard me throughout each silent night,
O Father, till that morn,
When to thy heaven of love and light
My spirit shall be borne.

A SONG OF HEAVEN.

Beyond the boundless blue on high,
Far, far above the star-lit sky,
Methought that heaven lay.
Yet, gazing in thy soulful eyes,
I seem to look on Paradise,
So chaste, so fair are they.

With perfect bliss, methought, God's love
Would only in that land above
The human soul endow.
Yet in thy presence dear, divine,
Such holy joy and peace are mine,
I feel heaven here and now.

CHRISTMAS EVE.

It is Christmas eve, it is Christmas eve ;
The children are all fast asleep, I believe ;
For Santa Claus soon is to come, that I know,
To fill all the stockings from top down to toe.
He waits till the moon is out shining quite bright
To find his way down through the chimney by night
He leaves his small reindeer and sled on the street,
And takes all his gifts from the high piled up seat.
Then into the nursery he quietly goes,
First peeps at the children in silent repose,
He sees all the stockings hung up in the nook
And fills each with sugarplums, toys and a book.
Then back to his sled he runs, freed of his load,
And drives out of sight, far up over the road.
He wishes us all ere he'll soon disappear,
"A Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year."

EMIGRAVIT.

In the pride of summer's glory,
When the flowers were bright and gay,
And the little birds sang sweetly
In the trees the livelong day,
Death's swift angel came and bore her
From our midst away.

Earth could ill afford to lose her,
Lose a soul so pure and fair ;
But it is a gain for heaven,
Where she liveth blest fore'er.
And the stars are shining brighter,
Now that she is there.

Yonder in its bloom and beauty
Stands the stately golden-rod,
Seems to whisper, pointing upward
From the dark and grassy sod,
" She is free from care and anguish,
In the peace of God."

Should we wish her here among us,
In this world of strife and pain,
When within her Father's mansion
She may happily remain ?
No: for though we mourn, we will not
Call her back again.

"Hush, be still!" a voice proclaimeth
In mild accents from the skies,—
"*Still, and know that God thy God is.*"
Can then harm to man arise?
Come, O Faith, be our Consoler,
Dry all sorrowing eyes.

A SUNSHOWER.

Sun and rain have gone to war :
Which of them will win ?
Clouds are gathering near and far,
No more light streams in!
Is the sun already slain
By the cannon-balls of rain,
Shot through thick and thin ?

Ah, no ! for the sun, aglow,
Shines out from on high,
Bends his mighty, colored bow,
And the arrows fly.
Full ten thousand sunbeams dart,
Pierce each raincloud to the heart,
Till they vanquished lie.

EVERLASTINGS.

A garden of gay summer-flowers among,
These simple dry blossoms I chose,
And left the pure lily with bright golden tongue
Unplucked there beside the pink rose ;
For what would their fragrance and beauty avail
If they, when they reach thee, are faded and pale ?

These dry little flowers I culled from their bed,
Dear emblems that live and remain
Unchanged and unblemished when others are dead,
And long since all withered have lain.
These fadeless, crisp blossoms I beg you will take—
My love *everlasting*—for Love's own sweet sake.

SPRING AND DEATH.

Under the ice and the snow on the ground,
Spring lies there hidden from sight and from sound ;
Neither the piteous wails of the wind,
Seeking the rest that he never can find,
Seem to arouse her or summon her forth.
Meanwhile the Winter—great bird of the north—
Shelters and guards her with mother-like care,
Spreading his snowy white wings over her.
Nor will he hence till the mandate be given,
“Rise, rise up, O Spring, draw earth nigh unto heaven!”

Think not, O man, that thy loved ones are dead,
When in the cold and damp ground they are laid.
Though thou art parted from them for a while,
Yet they *live*, hallowed and blest with God's smile.
Shielded, protected, they dwell overmore
Happier than ever they could be before.
Were there no heaven, there could be no love.
Trust, then, thy dear ones are resting above.
And, as the Spring greets the Earth year by year,
So will man meet those he sought and loved here.

NOTHING WITHOUT LOVE.

(Translated from the German of Vogl.)

Little sprightly bird, and free,
Happy in swift flight forever,
Singing gayly on each tree,
But—
Without love, never, never !

Nodding flowers, as they grow,
Whisper in the morning glimmer,
Life, how beautiful art thou !
But—
Without love, never, never !

Billows word for word exchange,
Flashing in bright rays of silver,
Two by two they gladly range,
But—
Without love, never, never !

Thou heart filled with joy and pain
Feelest, too, this one truth ever,
Blest wilt thou alone remain,
But—
Without love, never, never !

SUMMER TWILIGHT.

Dim shadows steal, with noiseless tread,
In swift succession by,
As twilight, with her wings outspread,
Hovers 'twixt earth and sky.

The stately lily hangs her head
In dewy, sweet repose ;
The pansy, curled up in her bed,
Slumbers beside the rose.

The birds have sought their downy nest,
Secure on tree-tops high,
*While winds are rocking them to rest,
Chanting a lullaby.

Above, two stars peep shyly out
To view the young moon rise,
That, like a fairy, golden boat,
Anchored in heaven lies.

And in this still and solemn hour
All strife and tumult cease ;
For over earth, with mystic power,
Broodeth a hallowed peace.

THE EASTER GOSPEL.

It is not in a world beyond our own
Man life eternal wins ;
Nor need he cross Death's silent bridge of stone
Before that life begins.

Eternity is first with man below,
E'en from his very birth ;
A heaven hereafter can he only know
By making one of earth.

Christ rose by triumph over sin and wrong
When in the desert tried,
Not that third day when vainly sought the throng
His body crucified.

So when all evil dies, and base desire,
Our souls are sanctified,
Upraised, and purged by God's consuming fire ;
And this is Easter-tide.

While for the rest, O man, thy faith still keep,
And know Death ends not all ;
The Lord our shepherd is, and we his sheep,
Who humbly wait his call.

We wander here awhile and widely roam,
Set down on Earth's domain ;
But God will bear us, when night's shadows come,
Safe to his fold again.

SOLITUDE.

One little bird on tree-top high
Sings out his plaintive lay,
One single star out on the sky
Keeps watch till break of day.

The last sweet rose that summer shed
Must quite forsaken feel ;
For down her cheeks, all flushed and red,
Great dewy teardrops steal.

And I amid the silence here
Stand at my garden gate.
Alas, how long the hours appear
To those who watch and wait !

But morning breaks. The bird hath flown.
To join its mate afar ;
And back unto its sisters gone
That single evening star.

To kindred flowers a kindly wind
The rose's bloom has blown ;
While I, alas ! remain behind,
To tread my path *alone* !

SONG.

(From the German of Eichendorf.)

1.

How oft a merry strain I sing,
And joyous seem, and smile,
When bitter tears in secret wring
My aching heart the while.

2.

And thus the caged nightingale,
When balmy Spring allures,
Pours out in sweetest notes her wail—
The longing she endures.

3.

Man hears with joy the melting strain,
His heart grows glad and strong,
Yet no one feels the hidden pain,
The anguish in the song.

MIGRATION.

Gay summer birds appear in crowds
Beneath an autumn sky,
While shrieking winds and lowering clouds
Warn them 'tis time to fly.

With eager joy they spread their wings
To take their southern flight.
There's One will guide their wanderings
To sunny lands, and bright.

O happy birds, forever free
From sorrow, toil, and care,
How full of sweetness life must be,
How beautiful and fair !

No winter storms about you blow,
No want is yours, nor pain.
Secure, to genial climes ye go
Till Spring returns again.

When life's dark wintry days draw near,
Oh, singing birds, like you
To some blest lands of joy and cheer
I fain would migrate, too.

SNOWFLAKES AND SNOWDROPS.

A shower of snowflakes came hurrying one day
A down from an April sky ;
But only a moment on earth could they stay,
Alas ! for the sun on high
Shot out glances so fierce on these flakes where they lay
That they trembled, and, melting in tears, slipped away.

A week glided by, when a wondrous sight
Was given one morning to greet.
The ground lately bare was now covered all white
With blossoms most dainty and sweet,
For the flakes that in tear-drops had vanished from sight
By the penitent sun were made snowdrops so bright.

DISTURB IT NOT.

(Translated from the German of Geibel.)

Where'er a heart with love o'erflows,
Disturb it not, but let it be :
The spark divine should not be quenched.
In sooth, it were not well with thee.

If e'er upon the wide earth's round
An unpolluted spot be found,
It is a young fresh, ardent heart
In love's first raptures deeply bound.

Oh, grant to it the sweet spring-dream
That blooms with rosy flowers bright :
Thou know'st not what a Paradise
Is lost, when this dream takes its flight.

For many a stout heart has been broken
When love was rudely torn away ;
And long endurance oft has turned
To hatred and despair for aye.

And many a lonely, aching soul
In direst need has loudly cried,
And thrown him down into the dust,—
The lovely god in him had died.

In vain, then, dost thou weep and grieve ;
For no repentance on thy part
Can make a withered rose revive
Or reawake a deadened heart.

NOCTURNE.

1.

Like a joy that has stayed a brief moment, and fled
Like a rose that has bloomed for a while then lies dead,
 So opens and closes the day ;
While the sun in the west like a warrior bold,
Dons his cap and his mantle of crimson and gold
 And rides down the heavens away.

2.

With her sable wings lifted the night hovers near,
And enfolds in deep darkness the vast atmosphere,
 The Earth rests in silence and dreams ;
Up on high all the stars light their lanterns again
And are hanging them out in the sky to remain,
 Till morn wakes the world with her beams.

3.

Can it be that the moon has some sorrow to bear
That she secretly keeps and with Earth cannot share,
 Else why with a tear stained face,
Does she gaze down forever in pity below
With a look of such quiet submission and woe,
 As softly she circles through space ?

TO THE DYING YEAR.

Farewell, Old Year, farewell !
Thy last brief hour
Peals from the mellow bell
In yon church tower.

Ere the first blush of morn
Tinges the east
Will a new year be born,
And thou released.

Gladly, O Year of Pain,
I see thee go.
I would not drink again
Thy cup of woe.

And yet thou hast not been
Wholly unkind :
Days bright and joyous e'en
Flash on my mind,—

When Earth lay sweet and mild
In thy caress,
And Heaven itself had smiled,
And stooped to bless.

Thus, if the coming year
Should saddened be,
Thoughts of thine hours of cheer
Will comfort me.

Solemnly, one by one,
Ceases each bell.
Old Year, thy course is run !
Old Year, farewell !

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